

Case Study Report

From a Study
Conducted by

Barbara MKNelly
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Food Stamp workshop conducted by Lao Family Services staff member (Winnie YI) a partner of the Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB).

**Reaching the Other Eligible Californians:
California Association of Food Banks' (CAFB)
Food Stamp Outreach Project**

California Department of Health Services
Cancer Prevention & Nutrition Section
Research and Evaluation Unit, MS 7204
Sacramento, CA 95899-7413
(916) 449-5400 (phone)
(916) 449-5415 (fax)
www.ca5aday.com

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There are so many reasons, so many barriers, keeping people from getting the Food Stamps they need. But, it's not rocket science; and, we know how to do it.

— Jerry Sanders, Program Manager
Community Action Partnership of Orange County

I. Introduction

The most recent USDA statistics (Castner, et. al, 2005) estimate that only approximately half — 49 percent — of eligible Californians receive the food stamps to which they are entitled. For Federal Fiscal Year 02, California's average monthly Food Stamp Program participation was 1,709,147 persons, meaning that approximately 1.8 million income eligible Californians were not participating (FRAC, 2005). The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) points out the actual number is likely lower if USDA's methodology does not account for California's higher rate of undocumented, and therefore ineligible, persons (Seto, et. al, 2003). Still, there is experience in the charitable sector that many Californians who need Food Stamps are not currently enrolled in the program. Food insecurity among low-income ($\leq 200\%$ FPL) Californian adults is also on the rise (Harrison, et. al, 2005). The prevalence significantly increased from 29.1 percent in 2001 to 33.9 percent in 2003 or one in three low-income adults.

Drawing upon the experience of the California Association of Food Banks (CAFB), this report highlights strategies, resources and lessons learned for increasing Food Stamp utilization, based on the *California Nutrition Network for Healthy, Active Families* - funded Food Stamp Outreach Project. The intent is to generate recommendations for future collaboration, identify possible areas for strengthening projects, and improve prospects for replication of this promising demonstration project.

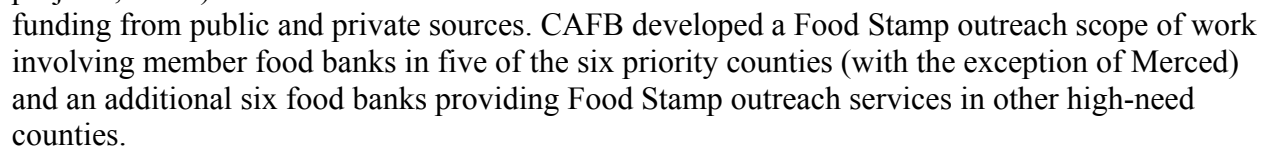
II. Background and Overview of the Project

In 2003, a two-year California Food Stamp Program Access Improvement Plan was developed based on study, dialogue and planning by state and federal officials, together with public and private sector Food Stamp and food security advocates and organizations. The Access Plan was intended to increase Food Stamp participation in six priority counties—Alameda, Fresno, Los Angeles, Merced, Orange and Tulare counties —selected on the basis of their high rates of poverty and food insecurity, low Food Stamp participation, successful conversion to EBT from Food Stamp coupons, and the willingness of County Food Stamp Programs to participate in outreach and accommodate possible increased caseloads.

USDA's distinction between Food Stamp Program **promotion** and Food Stamp Program **outreach** affects allowable activities and funding sources (see Appendix 1). Based on a long-standing Interagency Agreement (IAA) between the Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section (CPNS) of the California Department of Health Services and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Food Stamp Program, the *Network* receives matching federal financial participation funds through USDA's Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE). All *Network* funded projects are encouraged to incorporate promotion of the Food Stamp Program into their nutrition education activities; for example, by distributing Food Stamp program materials and local contact information. As defined by USDA, Food Stamp outreach expands beyond

With the Access Improvement Plan, California FSNE became perhaps the only Social Marketing Network to apply the Local Incentive Award funding mechanism to Food Stamp outreach. USDA's Western Regional Office (WRO) approved the use of Food Stamp outreach activities by nonprofits in California as in-kind that would trigger a dollar-for-dollar match through USDA's Food Stamp Outreach Program. In this way, the Access Plan established an entirely new funding match mechanism for Food Stamp outreach completely separate from, but complimentary to, FSNE.

(CAFB) was an ideal statewide member organization to help realize its goals. CAFB identified a total of \$283,911 in-kind dollars in FFY04 year one and \$372,446 in FFY05 from member food banks in eleven service areas (see map). CAFB and the *Network* established a 60:40 split with CAFB receiving the greater share of the matched federal funds plus additional grant funding for priority counties and technical assistance. Still, it was well appreciated that the in-kind and matching federal dollars represented relatively modest support for a project of this scale and scope. It was hoped these resources would be augmented through a county-level team approach that would 1) build upon the efforts of USDA, County Food Stamp Office staff, advocates, and other community based groups' efforts; 2) coordinate with the Food Stamp promotion efforts of *Network* funded projects; and 3) attract new resources and



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Table 1: Food Banks participating in CAFB's Food Stamp Outreach Project

	# of Persons Served (per Month)	# Food Distributing Agencies	Amount of Food Distributed (lbs. a year)
Priority Counties			
Alameda County Community Food Bank (ACCFB)	120,000	300	12 million
Community Action Partnership of Orange County Food Bank (CAPOC)	288,000	300	17 million
Community Food Bank, Fresno	n/a	160	7.4 million
FoodLink for Tulare County	40,000	80	7.2 million
Los Angeles Regional Food Bank	1,400,000	n/a	46 million
Other High-Need Counties			
Food Bank Coalition of San Luis Obispo County	24,000	140	2.5 million
Food Bank for Monterey County	10,807	n/a	6 million
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano	84,000	202	6.9 million
Food for People Inc. Humboldt County	8,500 – 10,000	n/a	1.4 million
Human Resources Council Food Bank, (HRC) Calaveras County	945	n/a	95,130
Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz & San Benito Counties (joined FY05)	47,000	130	5.5 million

Unfortunately, the first year of CAFB's Food Stamp Outreach Project was slowed by state budget delays. Although the project began in October, 2003, work could not be initiated until well into the 2004 calendar year in many areas. The outreach activities described here occurred through calendar year 2004 into early 2005. The information for this case study was provided through a questionnaire completed by nine participating food banks (those in Table 1 except the food banks in L.A. and Fresno). In addition, the food banks in Alameda, Tulare, and Orange counties hosted site visits offering the opportunity for the *Network's* research and evaluation staff to observe outreach in action.

III. Defining the Issues

"During this project, we quickly became aware of how many myths existed with regard to the Food Stamp Program." — **Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano**

"Literally people are willing to starve—they'd rather go hungry—than jeopardize becoming a citizen." — **Hunger Fellow working with the Tulare FoodLink**

"Many people I talked with found it was very hard to get all the required certifications together and make another trip to the Food Stamp office. They just gave up."
— **Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano**

Food bank staff, volunteers and partners work to increase Food Stamp awareness and utilization through a myriad of direct service, advocacy, partnership, public education and media strategies.

When asked to list and rank the barriers most important for explaining why eligible persons do not receive Food Stamp benefits, food bank staff identified a diverse set of factors (see Table 2).

An average weighted score was calculated based on staffs' ranking of barriers from least to most important¹. Barriers were also ranked according to how frequently they were mentioned. Some differences are evident in the two approaches. For example, customer service issues such as frustration with frequently changing case workers is mentioned only once but for that county it ranked as the number one barrier. Of course, people eligible for Food Stamps are not homogenous so a barrier's relative importance will depend on the person's circumstances or characteristics. For example, the issue of public charge was ranked as the number one barrier by four food banks (Tulare, Orange, Monterey and San Luis Obispo) working primarily, or almost exclusively, with immigrants. However, public charge was not mentioned at all by staff from Humboldt, Contra Costa or Solano; they did, however, rank Food Stamp office hours (specifically no lunch, weekend or evening hours) relatively high as compared to others.

Table 2: Why Eligible Persons Do Not Receive Food Stamps, as Reported by Food Bank Staff

	Ranking from Most to Least Important (based on avg. weighted score)	Number of Food Banks Identifying This Barrier (total=9)
Fear Food Stamps will hurt chances of immigration/public charge issue	1	5
County-level case workers (frustrated with frequent changes and lack of communication)	2	1
Think not eligible/Misconceptions about eligibility	3	6
Afraid they will owe money for FS dollars received	4	3
Stigma/Think it is "welfare"	5	3
Rude treatment by county workers	6	1
Fear of finger imaging requirements	7	4
FS office hours/Lack of knowledge about after hours appointments	8	2
Too much hassle - too many calls, office visits, reporting/too many documents/have to take time off to apply	9	6
Difficulty getting to FS offices/transport/face-to-face interview requirement	10	7
Fear of government/Giving information to the government	11	2
Counties budget constraints and their primary focus on error rate	12	1
No childcare	13	2
Benefit too small especially given time required	14	2
Language issues	15	1
People don't think they need the help	15	1

The barriers mentioned most often relate both to the application process—the face-to-face interview, multiple visits and paperwork— as well as, lack of information—people think they are not eligible or fear Food Stamps will hurt their citizenship chances.

¹ Weighted scores were calculated based on a barrier's relative ranking divided by the total number of barriers identified. For example, if food bank staff identified 4 barriers, the one ranked first was assigned .25 (1/4), the second .50 (2/4) and so on. For another food bank identifying 10 barriers, the barrier ranked first was assigned .10 (1/10), the second .2 (2/10) and so on. An average score for each barrier was then used for an overall ranking of "most" to "least" important.

The many barriers underscore the need for public education to address the misconceptions, myths and fears; and many also relate to customer service and operational barriers remedied only by policy or programmatic action. One of the most impressive aspects of the Food Stamp Outreach Project is the level of collaboration and engagement between the food banks and county Food Stamp offices in certain counties. While certainly challenging, these types of public/private collaboration can lead to service innovations that better meet the needs of those seeking Food Stamp assistance while still maintaining program integrity. In addition, because ‘fear’ is often cited as a reason people do not apply for Food Stamps, outreach by a trusted community based organization helps address a fundamental obstacle.

IV. Direct Outreach Strategies

This section summarizes the range and various types of direct outreach services funded through the CAFB’s outreach project and some of the lessons learned.

“Our outreach efforts are done by bi-lingual, bi-cultural staff and we frequently promote the fact that Food Stamps do not affect your immigration status.... Our outreach efforts are conducted at sites which are based in local communities and we have an established relationship there.”

— **Food Bank of Monterey County**

“Our approach is friendly.... a clipboard and hand-held literature, rather than put up a table or display. This allows us to be mobile, and approach everyone in line. There is no stigma for someone to come up to a “Food Stamp” table—we talk to everyone.”

— **Food Bank Coalition of San Luis Obispo County**

Food Stamp Information

All nine food banks provide information about Food Stamps to clients either at food distributions or through food bank hotlines. Food banks and their network of distributing agencies have direct and daily interaction with people in food crisis. Most of the participating food banks also provide Food Stamp outreach services at community sites where people needing Food Stamps are likely to be found.

“Outreach materials were made available to our over 300 food distribution agencies. Emergency food pantry volunteers are provided Food Stamp Program information and encouraged to refer people to the Food Stamp Program.”

— **Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano**

“People have responded to the outreach pieces designed with special attention to immigrants, seniors and working families.” — **Alameda County Community Food Bank**

In many cases, food banks use USDA developed materials with local Food Stamp office information added. In several cases, food banks, in collaboration with a task force or the county, developed their own informational pieces (See Appendix 2). These materials typically provide 1) general Food Stamp information, 2) answers to frequently asked questions, 3) lists of common myths, 4) maximum income and benefits, 5) the location of county offices, 6) what materials are needed to apply for Food Stamps, 7) marketing messages aimed at defeating the negative association with Food Stamps, and 8) phone number or address of where to go for application assistance. For California, an important informational need is materials clarifying the “public

charge” concern and providing reassurance that receiving Food Stamps will not negatively affect a person’s immigration status.

All materials use easily readable, clear and straightforward language with English and Spanish in Alameda County; they are also provided in Cantonese and Vietnamese language versions in Alameda. (See Appendix B for a listing of Food Stamp outreach materials submitted by food banks.) Some of the material developed is of outstanding quality such as the “Free Food Within Your Reach: A Food Resource Guide for Alameda County”, developed by ACCFB. Increasingly food banks such as ACCFB are developing informational videos that can be played in waiting rooms or other community settings, as well as trainings.

Some food banks like the one in Monterey County also have a newsletter which updates clients on Food Stamp program changes such as the relaxation of the “car rule” and restored eligibility to people previously convicted of a drug related felony as well as location and hours of county benefit offices and farmers’ markets accepting EBT. The newsletter is distributed to approximately 3,000 households each quarter.

Food Stamp Pre-Screening

All but one of the nine food banks pre-screen individuals for Food Stamp eligibility. Seven conduct the screening face-to-face and four by phone. With the exception of Contra Costa and Humboldt, pre-screening is done in Spanish as well as English.

“The outreach tool we use at the food bank contains four qualification questions that pre-screen individuals for Food Stamps and also includes income guidelines for general, senior and disabled populations, and the potential [benefit] amounts. This is a one page, easily readable document which provides a quick reference for pre-screening. The template was provided to us by CAPOC [Community Action Partnership of Orange County].” — Food for People, Humboldt County

The Food Bank of Calaveras County does not pre-screen at the county’s request. Instead they distribute informational packets including the “Frequently asked Questions” brochure, a referral slip, and a list of what the client needs to bring to their appointment along with an envelope for paperwork.

Since late 2002, ACCFB has conducted over 2,000 phone pre-screens. Everyone calling the Food Helpline who is not receiving Food Stamps is prescreened for eligibility and entered into a database for subsequent follow-up. Similarly, Second Harvest of Santa Cruz and San Mateo provides Food Stamp information to the approximately 500-600 callers per month to their Community Food Hotline.

Application Assistance

If pre-screening indicates a person is potentially eligible, six of the nine participating food banks assist applicants to complete the Food Stamp application; again, either face-to-face or by phone.

If we assist someone to complete the A-1 by phone, then we mail it to them for their review and signature; then, they must send it in to the Food Stamp office. But it is better when we help them face-to-face. This way Part-1 is completed on the spot, and we take responsibility for submitting it to the county which we do right away. — Alameda County Community Food Bank

The Food Stamp application has two parts. The first commonly referred to as the “A-1” or “Part-1” is approximately 2-3 pages in length and collects information about an applicant’s address, ethnicity, household composition, income, cash assets, housing and utility expenses. The A-2 section is considerably longer. Only two food banks assist applicants with the A-2 portion of the application, CAPOC and Food for People, with the latter having been trained by the former. However, even if food bank staff reviews the A-2 form with an applicant, an eligibility worker is required to complete it.

Three of the nine food banks—in Orange, Humboldt and Santa Cruz Counties—also accompany applicants to the Food Stamp Office. The model developed in Orange County is described in greater detail in Box 2.

Some food bank staff emphasized how complicated the current application is, especially the A-2 portion. Because the wording and terms for certain questions are unclear, they believe it can confuse and discourage people from applying. Another food bank reported difficulty securing copies of the application at all. They explained Food Stamp applications are not available to everyone “just for the asking” at the Food Stamp office. People are told they cannot get copies for a friend, they need to go to another office or they need to complete an interview first before receiving an application. They did not know the application could be downloaded (http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/foodstamps/Application_1933.htm) from the California Department of Social Service website.

Application Follow-up

Following the application submission, six of the nine reporting food banks have follow-up contact with applicants either at the organization’s or the applicant’s initiation.

“We learned that the real challenge is not getting the information out, educating clients and debunking myths but [it] lies in the ability to have a qualified and trusted community member assist with every step of the Food Stamp application process. We have a staff member [who] calls clients to follow-up with them; however, some applicants do not have phones, work odd hours, or require more assistance than we can currently offer.” — Food Bank for Monterey County

Several food banks attempt to follow-up to determine clients’ application status. Re-contacting applicants is not always possible since telephone numbers and addresses are unstable, especially when people are in a crisis. In some cases, when they have questions or have not heard back on their application, assisted persons will contact the food bank staff who then follow-up with the county offices. Several food banks recommended establishing a client advocate or ombudsmen within the county office for this type of client follow-up as a strategy for increasing Food Stamp utilization.

Direct Outreach Venues

*“The Food Bank and outreach partners have provided over 50 Food Stamp clinics throughout the county at food distributions, schools and child care centers, senior centers, shelters, adult schools, WIC offices, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance sites and others.”
— Alameda County Community Food Bank*

The various outreach services—information, pre-screening and application assistance— are occurring at a tremendous range and number of sites. In addition to the food pantries and closets, Table 3 summarizes where outreach activities occurred during the project’s first year (information was not collected from ACCFB and Second Harvest). These sites offer opportunities to reach various segments of the Food Stamp eligible population e.g. parents, seniors, immigrants, employees, tax payers and parolees. The Nutrition on the Go! site is a community based approach being implemented by FoodLink in Tulare in very low income areas (see Box 1).

Table 3: Year One Outreach Sites (7 Food Banks)

	Total Sites		Total Sites
Schools	50	Church/ Mosque/ Temple	6
USDA Commodity Distribution Sites	43	Health Fair	6
Family Resource Centers	18	PACT Paroles	4
WIC Program Sites	16	Worksites (Wal-Mart and K-Mart)	2
Headstart and Early Head Start	14	Mexican Consulate	2
<i>Nutrition on the Go!</i> Sites	11	VITA sites (volunteer income tax assistance sites)	1
Senior Center	10	Hunger Awareness Day	1
Community Fair/Farmers’ Market	8		

Mexican consulates are a new venue for Food Stamp outreach. In July of 2004, USDA signed an agreement with Mexico to help eligible Mexicans living in the U.S. qualify for available nutrition assistance. CAPOC contacted the consulate and was invited to provide outreach services at their office and to accompany a mobile unit traveling to remote, rural communities to provide *Matricula Consular* (ID cards issued by the Consulate). In one day, CAPOC staff was able to share Food Stamp information with approximately 700 people who had, they believed, very little previous exposure to the program.

Box 1: *Nutrition on the Go!*—Fresh Produce, Recipes and Food Stamp Assistance

Little of the food donated to the food banks is fresh produce, and many of the food closets and pantries lack the capacity to handle it. As a result, people receiving emergency food services rarely are given fresh fruits or vegetables. This reality led FoodLink in Tulare to initiate Nutrition on the Go! Produce donated to the food bank, or purchased, is brought to 11 community sites on a monthly basis. Selected communities are very poor, relatively small and have few, if any, local stores selling fresh produce.

A fair-like setting is established with balloons, taste testing and recipes, nutrition quizzes, and small give-aways. Interested persons are pre-screened and provided on-the-spot Food Stamp application assistance. From 100 to 600 families attend each event. People go home with a bag of healthy food, a recipe which they’ve already tried and, if potentially eligible, having completed the first step in the Food Stamp application process.

Many of the sites—schools, parks, churches—were provided by contacts FoodLink made through the *Network* collaborative. The nutrition education is funded, in part, by USDA’s Food Stamp Nutrition Education while the outreach is funded, in part, through CAFB’s project. Other local agencies also use the “Nutrition on the Go!” opportunity to provide information and services.

When asked which community venues proved especially good for Food Stamp outreach, the food banks shared valuable observations.

“The best venues have been where there are large numbers of people congregating at food distribution sites. Large food giveaways like the USDA, Brown Bag and also local pantry programs. It’s very helpful that the individuals are waiting on-line and are very approachable. They have time to answer prescreening questions and also time to fill out Application Part A. Some venues for outreach sound better than they actually turn out to be. Health fairs, community festivals or farmers’ market may not be worth the effort unless they are especially geared for low-income.” — **Food Bank Coalition of SLO County**

The community venues that have proved to be most conducive to effective Food Stamp outreach have been where potential recipients receive other goods or services such as WIC, HEAP, and food assistance. The clients are in an atmosphere where they have a relationship with the staff and can trust the source and the information they are receiving.
— **Food Bank for Monterey County**

Face to face application assistance is more effective than over the phone. But hour for hour, both may be equally effective. — **Alameda County Community Food Bank**

V. Partnership Strategies

Achieving the county level impacts in Food Stamp utilization intended by the Food Stamp Access Plan requires considerable cross-agency collaboration and partnerships.

Food Banks and County Social Service Food Stamp Administrators

In all the surveyed counties, food banks were coordinating their outreach work with their county Food Stamp Program.

A positive working relationship with our County is vital to our effectiveness in increasing the Food Stamp participation rates. — **Food for People, Humboldt County**

Our county Food Stamp office has played a huge partnership role with the Food Bank. We discuss strategies, problems, events on a weekly basis. The Food Bank has twice underwritten the cost of printing brochures for the Outreach efforts. All successes are shared and we truly consider the Department of Social Services an advocate for eligible individuals.
— **Food Bank Coalition of SLO County**

County Social Services, and especially outreach staff, contributes in a great variety of ways to the outreach project by providing training, Food Stamp informational materials and applications as well as direct outreach services. In Monterey, the County Department of Social Services outreach worker visits all the food bank’s food assistance sites, including community pantries, to promote the program and assist clients with the preliminary application. In Humboldt County, staff answers the more technical questions at various community meetings organized by the Food Bank. In Orange County, a Food Stamp eligibility worker shows the required Rights and Responsibilities video and interviews applicants at the Food Stamp workshops organized by the Food Bank (see Box 2).

Box 2: Food Stamps in Four Hours

The Community Action Partnership of Orange County (CAPOC), working in partnership with the Orange County Social Service Agency (OCSAA), conducts Food Stamp workshops designed to help people enroll in the Food Stamp Program in one day. In contrast, a four-county study found application processing required on average, from 2.4 to 2.9 office visits to complete (Meltzer, et. al).

Interested persons pre-screened at USDA commodity food distribution sites are invited to a workshop held at several Family Resource Centers in Orange County. In advance, CAPOC sends the County Office applicant information so the required County Food Stamp database search can be completed by the day of the workshop. Childcare is provided while applicants

- Complete parts 1 & 2 of the application;
- View the Rights and Responsibilities video typically only shown at the County Office at scheduled times;
- Conduct a face-to-face interview with a County eligibility worker who comes to the family center; and
- Travel by van to the County office to complete the required finger imaging.

Because of the high level of coordination with the OCSAA office, applicants' time at the County office is only a matter of minutes rather than hours. Each applicant then receives a letter whether they are eligible and, if so, their EBT card.

In counties where the food bank has several years experience and considerable expertise in Food Stamp outreach, the level of coordination and partnership is really quite striking. In Orange County, CAPOC's "Food Stamps in Four Hours" approach is written in the County's official operations manual. In Alameda, ACCFB and county outreach staff co-train other community organizations and jointly produce a newsletter distributed to all county Food Stamp staff. As an incentive for outcome tracking, the newsletter publicizes the eligibility worker who will win the monthly prize for processing the most applications submitted through the outreach project.

Where food banks were relatively new to outreach efforts, the project seems to have been a catalyst for greater collaboration. One food bank described how previous efforts to make contact with the county's Food Stamp Program had not been productive. However, when the county agreed to participate in the outreach project, bi-monthly face-to-face meetings were arranged.

"Initially, just getting updated publicity material with accurate phone numbers and office locations was a challenge. These meetings have continued and ... Food Stamp personnel are currently cooperative and encouraging of our efforts."

Food banks and county Social Service staff undoubtedly face a challenge to forge a productive working relationship despite, what can be, very different organizational cultures and approaches and a context of severely limited financial resources. Where county Food Stamp agencies, and especially management, clearly articulate that increasing Food Stamp utilization is a priority, this becomes the unifying shared purpose.

Considerable communication and collaboration is required before 1) county Food Stamp Program staff have confidence in the food banks' ability to represent the Food Stamp Program; and 2) the food banks have confidence in county's ability to process the applicants they refer.

County Task Forces or Committees

The access plan also encouraged the establishment of county Food Stamp task forces to engage and involve other service organizations including *Network* funded Food Stamp nutrition education projects. In several areas, similar groups already existed.

In Contra Costa County, the Food and Nutrition Policy Consortium (formerly the Hunger Task Force) has been meeting for nearly 20 years. Staying abreast of the challenges presented by Food Stamp program administration has been a focus of this organization for several years
— **Food bank of Contra Costa and Solano**

The Food Stamp Access Task Force, which was formed by Food for People in 1999, meets on a monthly basis to provide partners an opportunity to discuss and take action on important issues. The County Food Stamp Program Manager has become an important presence on this Task Force enabling our collaboration through discussion and education. [In addition] our Task Force is attended by representatives of ... Mobile Medical, Head Start/Early Head Start, Area Agency on Aging, Project LEAN, Redwood Community Action Agency, Tu Casa, and North Cost Children's Services. — **Food for People, Humboldt County**

In Alameda, the committee developed materials to address their clients' common myths about the Food Stamp Program. Outreach staff credits the committee as key for involving other community based organizations interested in enrolling eligible families. In Tulare and Orange Counties, food bank outreach staff regularly meets with other *Network* funded projects providing nutrition education and Food Stamp promotion. Again, County Food Stamp Services' staff has played an important educational role for these groups given their food stamp program expertise.

As community groups learn more about the potential benefits of Food Stamps for their clients, they often are eager to do more and are somewhat frustrated (and perplexed) that activities such as pre-screening are not allowable by FSNE. Similarly, some food bank staff have expressed frustration since they believe promotion alone will have little to no affect on Food Stamp participation. Of course, organizations can seek alternative funding for outreach. And, there are examples like Nutrition on the Go! (See Box 1) where services from the two separate USDA funding sources are provided at the same site to the same clientele. However, the administrative burden of maintaining separate documentation and reporting is considered very onerous by some of the food banks with both funding streams.

The amount of reporting and record keeping is insane. It is very, very cumbersome. Each year I weigh whether this is worth it do I want to do this? Then I come out here and see the looks on children's faces and I decide to keep going with it.

Training other Community-Based Organizations

Another way the project aims to have a county impact is by training other community-based organizations to do Food Stamp outreach. Food banks such as Alameda, Orange and Humboldt, share their knowledge and the approaches they've developed with others in their area or other parts of the state (see Box 3).

Since September 2002, the Food Bank and Alameda County Social Services have provided Food Stamp Program trainings for over 75 persons from 30 community based organizations.

— **Alameda County Community Food Bank**

CAFB and Food for People organized 1-day training in Humboldt so that CAPOC and OCSAA, who joined by phone, could share their expertise about the Food Stamp Program, application procedures and their Food Stamps in Four Hours approach.

— **Community Action Partnership of Orange County**

Food for People in Humboldt County has emphasized this training approach. They believe that certain client populations, such as immigrants, have particular concerns most effectively addressed by someone whom the client trusts and already has a relationship with. Food for People staff believe training case managers, and others who work directly with low-income clients, is the most effective outreach approach which allows them to reach the largest number of potentially eligible individuals. Staff from 30 agencies representing a tremendous range of social service oriented groups attended the one-day training described above.

Food banks also seek specific partnerships to better reach segments of their community. For example, ACCFB has developed a partnership with Lao Family Services to more effectively serve the South East Asian community in Alameda County.

Box 3: Food Stamp Outreach Training: Food Stamps and Earned Income Tax Campaign (EITC)

ACCFB's Food Stamp Outreach Coordinator provided Food Stamp Enrollment training to coordinators of the county's 20 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites. VITA sites are held at community and government organizations to provide free tax help to low-income wage earners and participate in the County's Earned Income Tax Credit Campaign.

The Training covers the Food Stamp Programs' purpose; eligibility myths and facts; definition of household; application process; income limits; expenses and deductions; allowable resources, maximum benefit allotments; and how Food Stamp outreach would be done at the VITA sites

How it Works: When Tax payers arrive, they complete an intake form that includes a question asking if they want to know if their household qualifies for Food Stamps. If so, they are given a Food Stamp pre-screen worksheet to complete. The client gets a copy and the site keeps a copy to be faxed to ACCFB. Within 3 days, staff from the Food Bank will contact the applicant to follow-up. Or, if the person wants to call ACCFB that same day, they can do so. ACCFB or Lao family staff will follow-up with the taxpayer within three days to assist them with the food stamp application process. Taxpayers coming to the VITA site also given "Free Food Within Your Reach" A Food Resource Guide for Alameda County.

VI. Media and Public Education

Food banks in Humboldt, Monterey, Tulare and San Luis Obispo developed media or public education campaigns. For example, in SLO the food bank sought media coverage for major events and did voice-over for the 30-second spots about the new Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) California Advantage Card. The food bank in Monterey did a number of public service announcements on local Spanish radio stations.

With the help of Congressional Hunger Fellows, the food banks in Fresno and Tulare developed media strategies which led to considerable local print, television and radio coverage, including a National Public Radio (NPR) profile. Their public education strategy included a focus on local officials such as the Board of Supervisors and led to a county proclamation proclaiming Tulare “*A Food Stamp Friendly*” county. The campaign emphasized the value of Food Stamps to those in need but also the economic benefits to the local economy.

In Humboldt, fliers, newspaper, radio and television were used to promote the use of EBT at farmers’ markets. Public Service announcements aired on television reaching an estimated 570,000 viewers and on radio reaching an estimated 720,000 listeners. The media campaign was considered very effective and was credited with marked increases in Food Stamp usage at farmers’ markets.

VII. Evidence of Success

When asked to describe their organization’s top three outreach achievements, food bank staff responses reflected the range of activity and success over the last year. Almost every food bank mentioned their stronger relationship and/or ongoing dialogue with the county and the large number of contacts they had with potentially eligible persons. Some identified a new or promising outreach strategy or institutional capacity.

“Developing a true, workable partnership with the county Food Stamp office so that together we might better serve the needs of our community.” — Food Bank Coalition of SLO County

*“Dramatically increasing the recognition of the Food Stamp program and its benefits in the community and reaching at least 13,475 low-income Monterey families.”
— Food Bank of Monterey*

*“Reaching outlying areas with information via the mobile food pantry”
— Human Resource Council Food Bank, Calaveras County*

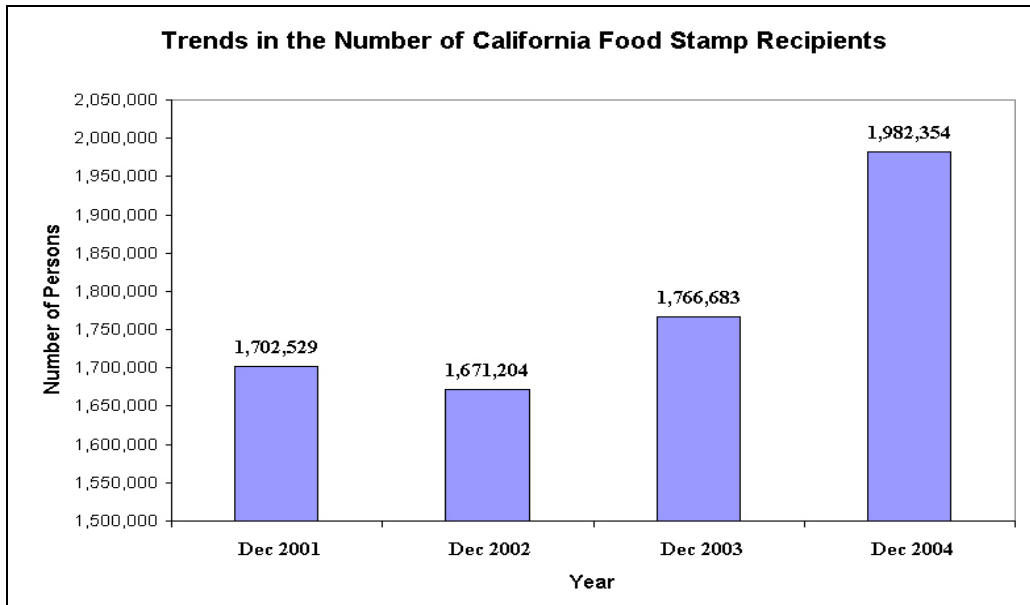
— “Providing the outreach training in Humboldt to 38 local agencies. This was a new breakthrough activity for us.” — Community Action Partnership of Orange County

Several food banks referred to county-level increases in Food Stamp clients or the Farmers’ Market Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) Program.

*“Being part of an effort that increased the county participation rates jump by 22% during the past year. In December, we noted that 1400 more people were now being issued Food Stamps. At least \$100,000 more each month was being issued”
— Food Bank Coalition of SLO County*

“Food for People and partners outreach efforts increased the use of Food Stamps at the Farmers’ Market by 33%.” — Food for People, Humboldt County

California’s Food Stamp recipient numbers show much greater increase in 2004 than previous years. From December 2001 to 2003, the number of California Food Stamp recipients increased by only 3.8%, as compared to 12.2% from 2003-2004.



Source: Food Resource and Action Center

http://www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/programs/fspparticipation.html

While policy reforms such as the car allowance and reducing reporting requirements from monthly to quarterly probably explain much of this increase, Food Stamp outreach also likely contributed as well. Table 4 shows the one-year increase in monthly Food Stamp participation was higher than the statewide average of 12.2% in twelve of the thirteen participating counties.

Table 4: Food Stamp Program: Monthly Participation by County (persons)

	Number of Individuals — December 2003	Number of Individuals — December 2004	1-Year % Change
Priority Counties with Food Banks participating in CAFB's outreach project			
Alameda	60,142	68,293	13.6%
Fresno	96,286	116,172	20.7%
Los Angeles	629,613	671,176	6.6%
Orange	71,367	80,225	12.4%
Tulare	49,869	58,435	17.2%
Other High-Need Counties with Food Banks participating in CAFB's outreach project			
Calaveras	1,431	1,690	18.1%
Contra Costa	24,103	28,954	20.1%
Humboldt	8,795	10,854	23.4%
Monterey	15,853	18,123	14.3%
San Benito	2,415	2,979	23.4%
San Luis Obispo	5,222	6,579	26.0%
Santa Cruz	8,441	10,023	18.7%
Solano	13,319	16,298	22.4%

Source: CDSS - DFA 256 http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/research/DFA256-Foo_422.htm

Food banks routinely track the Food Stamp Program literature they distribute and the number of people they assist, so they are able to quantify the scale of their activities.

“Outreach is occurring at USDA commodity distributions, Food for Children distributions, pantries and soup kitchens- speaking directly with clients picking up food about Food Stamps, assisting with applications. We are speaking with at least 900 people per month, and we assisted with about 50 food applications from October to December, 2004.”

— **Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties**

Food banks can obtain the latest information about their counties’ applications, participation and Food Stamp issuance from the California Department of Social Services web-site. However, truly evaluating the outcome of their outreach efforts requires tracking the status of assisted applications. Several food banks such as in Alameda and Calaveras have attempted to do this by re-contacting assisted persons to learn whether they ultimately enrolled in the Food Stamp Program. The limitations include the difficulty to contact the applicant and, once contact is made, they may not know why their application was denied.

Although it requires the county’s collaborative effort, the ideal approach is to track the outcome through the county’s regular Food Stamp Program data system. Applications used by the food banks are clearly stamped either with their name or project title. The challenge for the county office is to establish a system—which could be as simple as a single code in the database—to be used by all eligibility workers processing applications. Food banks in Alameda, Monterey, Orange and Tulare received this type of tracking information from their county office. (Second Harvest Food Bank in Santa Cruz received this type of information during a previously funded USDA Food Stamp Outreach Project.)

Table 5 reports the results for three counties. For Alameda, food bank staff believes only a portion of the assisted applications are actually flagged and tracked. Still, the county was able to report the status of almost 500 assisted applicants received over twelve months. For Orange County, information was available for all 147 *Food Stamps in Four Hours* participants over a nine month period. In Tulare, status information was available for 38 of the 47 applicants assisted in FoodLink’s very first quarter of outreach activity.

Table 5: Status of Assisted Food Stamp Applicants Who Were Tracked by the County

	Alameda (1/04-12/04) 12 months		Orange (3/04-12/04) 9 months		Tulare (9/04-12/04) 3 months	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Number of Assisted Applications	n/a	n/a	147	100%	47	100%
Tracked Applications	496	n/a	147	100%	38	81%
Approved	214	43%	78	53%	13	34%
Pending	29	6%	0	0	1	1%
Denied	245	49%	69	47%	22	58%
Withdrew	8	2%	n/a	0	2	8%

Approval ratings ranged from 34 to 53 percent. Orange County’s higher rate is expected since follow-up interviews and documentation should not be necessary with their approach. Some of the applications in Alameda and Tulare were still pending or people had withdrawn themselves from the process. Still, 47 to 58 percent of assisted applicants were denied.

Knowing why applicants are denied is extremely useful information for informing future outreach efforts but also, more generally, for illuminating the Food Stamp Program application process. Table 6 details the reasons county staff provided for the denials in Alameda and Tulare.

Table 6: Why Applicants Were Denied By the County

Reason for Denial	Number of Persons		% of those denied	
	Alameda	Tulare	Alameda	Tulare
• Over income limit (either gross or net)	38	4		
• Not a separate household	21	2		
• SSI recipient	11	-		
• Over resource limit	2	1		
• Not a citizen	1	2		
• Drug felon	2	-		
Sub-total— reason pertained to eligibility	75	9	31%	41%
• Failure to provide information	91	4		
• No show to 2 nd appointment*	63	8		
• Failure to complete application process	4	-		
• Failure to complete finger imaging	1	-		
• Failure to meet ABAWD work rule	1	-		
• Failure to meet student requirement	1	-		
• Loss of contact	1	-		
Sub-total—reason pertained to application process	162	12	66%	55%
Other	8	1	3%	4%

* When an assisted person's A-1 portion of the application is mailed to the County, the "2nd appointment" refers to the A-2 form interview.

It is striking that the two most common reasons for denial—the applicant failed to provide information or make their second appointment—relate to the application process rather than eligibility criteria per se. Only 16% of the denials in Alameda and 23% in Tulare were due to applicants having income or assets above the limits. The Food Stamp outreach staff person explained "failure to provide information" might actually reflect a person who does not keep their "2nd appointment" since this is typically when information is provided. CAPOC staff observed producing utility bills and documentation of rent payments can also be difficult in the type of shared living arrangements common to their clients. While better screening might have identified the eleven persons receiving SSI, the majority of cases (55-66%) were denied for reasons related to application requirements. If those who elected to withdraw from the process are added, the percentage would increase.

The efforts of these three food banks alone resulted in more than 300 persons, and their families, enrolling in the Food Stamp Program. This increases to 370 persons when Orange and Tulare Counties' reporting period is annualized. With average household benefits of \$200 per month, this represents an income transfer of \$74,000 per month or \$880,000 per year to low-income families and the communities in which they live.

VIII. Food Bank Staff Recommendations

Food bank staff themselves made the following recommendations, listed in declining order of frequency, for how best to increase participation in the Food Stamp Program:

- Complete applications at community-based organizations/greater partnership between county Food Stamp Program offices with community-based organizations
- Continue efforts to make the application process less onerous and more flexible
- Start a public education campaign, especially for immigrants, working people and seniors
- Implement mechanisms to improve customer service such as ombudspersons or staff advocates
- Extend county office hours
- Eliminate fingerprinting requirements
- Raise eligibility income levels and/or benefit levels, given the high cost of living in California
- Offer more training for food banks in Food Stamp eligibility scenarios

Not surprisingly, food bank staff identified the need for continued and increased financial support to underwrite the cost of their outreach work. CAFB and the *Network* would also like to see these efforts expanded with additional resources. Generation of additional local share is the major limiting factor for augmenting additional federal match amount. The question was posed by one of the Tulare Food Stamp Outreach Task Force members if county outreach expenses couldn't be used as a local match for additional federal dollars.

Food bank staff also expressed interest in continued technical support such as provided by CAFB to share "best practices" of strategies, materials and media pieces. One food bank specifically expressed the desire to learn about additional strategies to promote the processing of applications outside the County Food Stamp office. Recently, the *Network* provided CAFB with additional grant funding, in part, to attempt to recruit enough local share to support CAFB's costs to administer and provide technical assistance to this complex program effectively.

Food bank staff also identified specific types of assistance from other organizations which would help their efforts to increase Food Stamp participation.

Other Community Based Organizations or Local Agencies:

Food bank staff in selected areas expressed a desire for greater support from churches, pantries, and food distribution sites to approach their clientele to sign up applicants. They would also like to work more with community organizations with access to clientele in the more rural areas of the county and bilingual agencies working with the Hispanic/Latino population. Specific food banks mentioned wanting to work more with local schools, Head Start, Healthy Start organizations, employers and businesses (especially food industry) to promote Food Stamps.

County Social Service Food Stamp Offices

While food banks in some parts of the state report their county Food Stamp Program offices already collaborate in all ways, others identified various roles they would like to see their county offices play. Some of the specific steps identified for county offices included:

- Make Food Stamp applications readily available at community-based organizations.
- Update Food Stamp information on the county website.

- Assist in the training of community-based organizations.
- More actively inform individuals having difficulty getting to the office of alternative opportunities for telephone interviews, after-hour appointments and interview waivers for hardship cases.
- Track the status of assisted applicants
- Out-station eligibility workers and/or processing applicants at community health or family resource centers.
- Establish with the school districts a Memorandum of Understanding for express lane eligibility

USDA and the Network

Several recommendations were also specifically made to USDA and the *Network*:

- Work with USDA on creative waivers to allow Food Stamps for prepared foods.
- Have *Network* expect more Food Stamp promotion from all FSNE funded nutrition education projects around the state.
- Reduce reporting burden and requirement of separate tracking of staff time engaged in Food Stamp outreach versus Food Stamp Nutrition Education for those food banks participating in both *Network* funding streams.

XI. Conclusion

CAFB's Food Stamp outreach project has contributed to a tremendous degree of innovative and promising Food Stamp outreach work. In thirteen counties throughout the state, the matched federal funding has helped increase local capacity for Food Stamp outreach and fostered greater public/private collaboration for the shared goal of increasing Food Stamp utilization. A variety of materials and models have also been further developed for replication elsewhere, e.g., Food Stamps in Four Hours, Nutrition on the Go! with Food Stamp outreach, phone bank referral and tracking systems, and Food Stamp training with the case workers from a broad array of community groups.

Food Stamp utilization is on the rise in California. Relative to other states, California ranked 2nd from bottom in percent change in Food Stamp participation from December 2001-2003. California's one-year change ranked 9th from the top for December 2003-2004. For the great majority of counties participating in CAFB's outreach project, the rate of change is higher than the state average.

Information on the status of assisted applicants from just three counties indicates eligible households, and their communities, received an estimated \$74,000 per month or \$880,000 per year in Food Stamp benefits. However, many assisted applicants were ultimately denied Food Stamps because they did not complete the process. Continued innovation and collaborative work is required to make the application process better serve clients' needs and realities if outreach is to effectively lead to enrollment.

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Appendix 1

FOOD STAMP PROGRAM OUTREACH VERSUS PROMOTION

USDA Guidance 2004-2005 (excerpt)

SOURCE: The California Nutrition Network for Healthy, Active Families: 6/04

<p>Promotion = Delivering a message that provides information on the availability, benefits, and application procedures for the Food Stamp Program (FSP), preferably with information on local application sites or contacts. Promotion must be conducted in the context of nutrition education (i.e. FSP should be referenced routinely in nutrition education activities and on materials as an important source of nutrition assistance to help low-income persons achieve a better diet). However, promotion should not be the primary objective, as nutrition education must consistently comprise the bulk of any intervention or event. Promotional activities may not duplicate existing efforts funded through a State's Outreach Plan. Examples of FSP promotion activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Placing Food Stamp literature in sites patroned or visited by food stamp participants and comparable low-income households; ▪ Distributing information in locations where low-income persons are known to gather, such as housing developments, WIC clinics, schools in low-income areas, English as Second Language classes, soup kitchens, community service providers, employers of low-wage workers, or other locations; All FSP information must be provided in conjunction with nutrition education; ▪ Visiting and/or staffing booths at low income -eligible sites to promote the health benefits of participating in FSP, provide program information and answer questions; ▪ Convening meetings that include some FSP promotion information sharing and 	<p>Outreach = Any activity or set of activities in which the primary objective is to increase participation in the Food Stamp Program (FSP), through individual applicant assistance, community-based outreach message dissemination, or facilitation of systemic changes in FSP that enhance program accessibility.</p> <p>Note: <i>Food Stamp Outreach activities are allowable only for pilot project Non Profit Incentive Award California Association of Food Banks and those participating food banks. Examples of activities allowable under FSP Outreach include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pre-screening or assisting individuals with completing FSP applications and obtaining verification; ▪ Accompanying individuals to the FSP office to assist with the application process; ▪ Conducting outreach workshops for members of community organizations that serve low-income people; ▪ Convening meetings that focus exclusively or primarily on FSP Outreach and increasing FSP participation; ▪ Reimbursing the mileage for outreach training or meeting attendance; ▪ Producing and distributing print materials that are primarily FSP outreach in nature (e.g. brochures, posters) ▪ Developing and placing print, radio, television media advertisements to be used as public service announcements to educate potential applicants about FSP;
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<p>strategizing, but focus predominately on nutrition education efforts;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Producing and distributing brochures and posters that are primarily nutrition education in nature, but that contain a Food Stamp promotional message; ▪ Producing and placing radio, television, or print media spots that are primarily nutrition education in nature, but that contain a Food Stamp promotional message; ▪ Supporting nutrition policies with a food security component, which may also include aspects of promoting the benefits of FSP participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designing an FSP Outreach program, including the development, publication, and distribution of materials to the community; ▪ Building FSP promotion/outreach teams, steering committees, coalitions, etc. and providing FSP outreach guidance to other State and local organizations; ▪ Working with local agencies to plan and implement FSP Outreach and Program Access strategies, as well as monitoring and/or evaluating agencies' outreach performance.
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Appendix 2: Food Stamp Outreach Materials Used by Participating Food Banks

Name and Type	Brief Description of Content
Alameda County Community Food Bank	
<p><i>“Free Food Within Your Reach” A Food Resource Guide for Alameda County.</i> (bilingual).</p> <p>Available in Eng/Sp, Vietnamese, Chinese</p>	<p>The guide provide information and contact numbers for food programs for children (WIC, School breakfast and lunch), for families (food bank hotline, USDA commodities food, Partners in Need Program (volunteer for food), Food Opportunities (low-cost food program pay \$15 get food back valued at \$30), for seniors (meals on wheels, other Sr oriented programs) and Food Stamp program. Includes information about 1) who should apply, 2) where to apply, 3) what people need to bring, 4) how long need to wait, 5) max gross monthly income by HH size, 6) box what immigrants need to know and contact information for immigration assistance services, 7) information on Hunger Hotline, and 8) few more points about FS – if don’t have permanent place to live can use another address; if can’t turn in application in person what you should do; even if you are not eligible your children might be.</p>
<p><i>“What’s New with Food Stamps?”</i> 1 page, small graphics (bilingual)</p>	<p>Flier contains information regarding the new EBT cards, food bank contact number and gross monthly income limit. Also contains a disclaimer that persons cannot be eligible for food stamps if they receive SSI.</p>
<p>No Title, 1 page, small graphics (bilingual)</p>	<p>Fliers contain stories and quotes of people who receive Food Stamps. Also has food bank phone number.</p>
<p><i>“Cupones para Alimentos: Nuestra Salud, Nuestra Fuerza”</i> 2 pages, small graphics, USDA (Spanish)</p>	<p>Flier contains gross and net monthly income limits, savings limit, other requirements such as social security number, information on office locations, and maximum benefit amount.</p>
<p><i>“Food Stamps will not Affect Potential applicant for US CIS benefits”</i> 1 page, US Citizenship and Immigration Service (Bilingual)</p>	<p>The letter lets the reader know that the misunderstanding about Food Stamps may affect immigration status.</p>
<p><i>“Good News! INS Says”</i> 2 pages, small graphics (bilingual)</p>	<p>Flier contains information on how Food Stamps could affect certain other applications such as getting a green card, a victim of abuse, being a refugee or asylee, applying for citizenship or if you already had a green card. Also has food bank phone number.</p>
<p><i>“Food Stamp Verification Check List”</i> Envelope (bilingual)</p>	<p>Envelope has a listing of all materials needed to bring to Food Stamp application interview.</p>
<p><i>“Food Stamps, It pays to check them out!”</i> 1 page, small graphics (bilingual)</p>	<p>Flier for an informational meeting about Food Stamps and eligibility.</p>
<p><i>“Food Stamps: Program Overview”</i> 22 pages, small graphics</p>	<p>Training Manual made from a power point presentation. Contains information about the program’s purpose, participation rate, who is and is not eligible, the application process, pre-screening, processing time, household composition, countable resources, expenses and deductions, income limits, maximum benefit allotment, Food Stamp facts, and outreach sites and contact information.</p>
<p><i>“Food Matters”</i> 1 page, small graphics</p>	<p>Flier has success stories of people with Food Stamps, interviews with employees, and new information about checklist envelopes and application tips.</p>
Community Action Partnership of Orange County Food Bank	
<p><i>“Food Stamp Outreach Program”</i> 1 page, with pictures of office and staff</p>	<p>The pamphlet provides the mission and reasons why people don’t apply for Food Stamps, the process that the outreach goes through and a description of the services they provide to help the applicants. Also it includes income limits by gross monthly income and net monthly income and the address and contact information of the program.</p>

<i>"Apply for Food Stamps Today!"</i> 1 page, small graphics, (bilingual)	The flier has information on qualifying for Food Stamps including gross income limit, gross income and net monthly income. Also includes contact number.
<i>"Estampillas De Comida"</i> post card size, small graphics (Spanish)	The flier has information about application and documents to bring to apply
<i>"Food Stamps will not Affect Potential applicant for US CIS benefits"</i> 1 page, US Citizenship and Immigration Service (Bilingual)	The letter lets the reader know that the misunderstanding about Food Stamps may affect immigration status.
Food Bank Coalition for San Luis Obispo County	
<i>"Food Assistance Program"</i> 1 page, small graphics	The pamphlet includes food assistant facts and statistics, monthly maximum benefit, income limits, eligibility requirements and addresses and phone numbers of Department of Social Services.
<i>"Food Stamp Eligibility"</i> 1 page, small graphics (bilingual)	The flier has information regarding Food Stamp eligibility; for instance who is eligible, what verification is needed and income limits and maximum benefit. It also includes DSS office addresses and phone numbers.
<i>"Food Stamps and Medical"</i> 1 page, small graphics	The flier has information about Food Stamp eligibility and gross monthly income limit. Also has Medical eligibility information. Contains address and phone numbers.
<i>"Tarjeta Electronica de Beneficios"</i> 1 page, small graphics, (Spanish)	The flier has tear off information for the department of health services.
<i>"Need Food?"</i> ¼ page (bilingual)	Informational handout letting people know they could qualify for food assistance. Includes address and phone number of Department of Social Services offices.
Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano	
<i>"Want to get more food for your family?"</i> 1 page, small graphics (bilingual)	The pamphlet has information about the gross monthly income limit, what you can own and still receive Food Stamps, amount you can receive in Food Stamps, and requirements for application. Food bank phone number included also.
Food for People Inc. Humboldt County	
<i>"Food Stamps can help put food on the table"</i> 1 page, small graphics	The pamphlet contains information regarding what should be brought to apply, farmers' markets that accept Food Stamps, gross income limit, what you can own and still receive Food Stamps, and how much that can be received. It also has the address and phone number of the HHS office.
<i>"Food Stamp Benefits"</i> 2 pages, small graphics	The handout has information on gross monthly income limits and maximum benefits, answers to frequently asked questions, such as application process and approval and the benefits themselves, and eligibility. There is also information about property owning and type of income.
<i>"Apply for Food Stamps Today!"</i> 1 page, small graphics	The flier has information on qualifying for Food Stamps including gross income limit, gross income for people over sixty and disabled individuals. Also includes the maximum benefits and Food for People phone number.
FoodLink for Tulare County	
<i>"Tulare County Food Stamp Office"</i> business card (bilingual)	The business card sized hand out has the addresses and phone numbers for the Food Stamp office
<i>"Food Stamps Make America Stronger"</i> 1 page, large color pictures (bilingual) USDA	The flier has the general information about qualifying for Food Stamps and contact phone number.



Photo Source: Alameda County Community Food Bank

